

# **MINUTES**

## **Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force**

**Thursday April 29, 2008**

**9:00 AM**

**Council Chambers**

**Municipal Building**

**93 Cottage Street**

### **I. Call to Order 9:02 AM**

**Members Present:** Chair Paul Paradis; Vice-Chair Chris Fogg;; Nathan Young, Fred Cook; Mary Opdyke; Charlie Phippen; George Seavey; Greg Gordon; Amy Powers

### **II. Excused Absences**

*Ms. Opdyke moved with a second from Mr. Young to excuse Bob Bahr, Anne Krieg and Greg Veilleux. All were in favor of the motion.*

### **III. Minutes from previous meeting**

Ms. Powers asked to clarify the statement “there is concern from the industry” because she was not sure what industry the group was referring to. Mr. Young clarified the statement by saying the cab industry was the focus of the conversation. The group agreed to add the word “cab” before industry in the minutes from April 10.

*The minutes were unanimously approved as amended by a motion from Mr. Seavey with a second from Ms. Opdyke.*

### **IV. Staff Reports**

#### **A. Staff and Committee Reports**

Chief Young did not have anything new to add since the previous meeting. Mr. Cook asked about construction on West Street and whether it had anything to do with new parking spaces. Mr. Young offered that it may be related to the water service work.

Mr. Paradis noted the Town Council will hear the Committees recommendations from last meeting at its May 6 meeting. He will update Council on current projects to include showing them the fee spreadsheet as well as areas being considered for a downtown bus drop-off area.

Ms. Powers asked about the status of creating walking maps to help cruise ship passengers navigate the area. Mr. Fogg noted that the Chamber has a limited supply. The task force discussed the pros and cons of developing a walking map.

Ms. Powers asked if other taxi cab pick up and drop off locations were established. Mr. Young responded that no other locations have been designated.

***Mr. Young moved with a second from Mr. Cook to adopt the agenda. All were in favor of the motion.***

***Mr. Young moved with a second from Mr. Cook to amend the agenda to add an additional drop off location for cruise ship passengers near the Village Green.***

## **V. Regular Business**

### **A. Continue discussion with Ocean Properties on future plans for West Street and service to Cruise Ship tenders and passengers**

The item was tabled because no one from Ocean Properties was present.

### **B. Cruise Ship Fees – continued discussion on possible project**

Chairman Paradis reviewed the fee schedule table he prepared for the task force discussion. He noted that a column for Newport, RI was added for additional reference. Mr. Phippen noted that Newport does not charge for buses but has other fees for parking. Mr. Cook volunteered to gather more information on Newport's operations.

The task force discussed ways to determine fees and what should be covered by the fees, for instance, should items like water quality testing and industry training and networking be covered.

Mr. Gordon asked about whether fees should include an allocation for marketing. Mr. Fogg wondered if the cruise ships are at capacity. Mr. Paradis noted that allocating marketing dollars is an important issue and wondered what other ports do. Mr. Gordon offered that Portland has a paid position for marketing efforts. Ms. Powers estimated that about \$25,000 is set aside for this position but the money comes from different sources. Ms. Powers also noted that a lot of ad hoc marketing is done by ports. Ms. Powers suggested an operations/marketing budget line. Mr. Fogg offered that an opportunity would be missed by not marketing to cruise ship passengers and mentioned the Free Stay Maine promotion.

Mr. Cook asked about signage directing passengers around town. A survey is being developed to gather information on the subject.

Mr. Seavy offered that the town should have a person coordinating pedestrian traffic buses and taxis. This would help regulate those businesses allowed to sell tours. Mr. Young noted that it currently self regulates and Mr. Phippen added that he hears of complaints if a rogue business is selling tours. Mr. Gordon reiterated that tour operators self regulate. Mr. Paradis asked Mr. Phippen how he knows which tours belong and Mr. Phippen responded that there is a person with a clipboard on the pier coordinating tours. Mr. Phippen added that 9 out of 10 times he is notified in advance

if an additional operator wishes to access the area. Mr. Phippen does not believe a coordinating position is necessary. Ms. Powers suggested a best practices document that operators sign and Mr. Young and Mr. Phippen enforce.

Ms. Powers added that a line item should be added to the budget for marketing/operation because the town should be reimbursed for its work developing a walking map and distributing the Free Stay Maine promotion. Mr. Paradis noted that if the line item is added with money it should be shown how the money is allocated. Mr. Fogg added that a full time person should be greeting passengers with visitor information like a walking map and a Free Stay Maine promotion. Mr. Paradis asked what dollar amount should be allocated for marketing/operations. The task force agreed on \$20,000.

The task force moved on to discuss the best way to charge for fees and whether it should be per person or a hybrid scheme. Mr. Cook added that a nonrefundable fee should be added for ships that cancel. Mr. Phippen noted that he prefers the graduated fee schedule based on the number of passengers. The task force reached consensus that this is the best way to proceed.

Ms. Powers suggested that someone sit down with the Town Manager and Finance Director to make sure all costs are included. Mr. Paradis agreed to do this.

**C. A discussion on an additional drop off location at the Village Green (amended agenda item)**

Mr. Paradis opened the discussion about possible additional drop off locations at the Village Green. The task force discussed the drop off location in front of the Alternative Market on Mount Desert Street. Another possible drop off location is just down the road nearer the Main Street intersection. Mr. Phippen noted that the area is already crowded and an additional drop off location will make the problem worse. Mr. Gordon suggested evaluating the new drop off location with small ships with less passengers and make adjustments as necessary. The task force agreed to test the drop off location outside of the Alternative Market.

**VI. Public Comment**

Liz Weston from Acadia Park asked if it's the town's intent to limit other services at the pier that are not shore excursion operations. Mr. Young added that the town is simply trying to control what goes on in that space.

Ms. Weston asked how land based tours know where to park on cruise ship days. Mr. Seavey said no bus tours are excluded.

Ms. Weston asked if the fees will include water quality testing and Mr. Paradis noted yes it will include sea water testing near the ship.

Ms. Weston asked if the fees will include air testing and Mr. Paradis noted that the task force has not discussed that issue.

**VII. Items for next agenda –**

Mr. Paradis will meet with the Town Manager and Finance Director and report back. Mr. Paradis asked if the walking map should be on the next agenda and the task force agreed that it should. Mr. Gordon asked about the meeting schedule moving forward into the summer months now that the season is about to start. Mr. Paradis said this will be discussed at the next meeting.

**VIII. Set next meeting time, date and place May 8, 2008 at 8:30 AM**

**IX. Adjournment – 11:16 AM - *Mr. Seavey moved with a second from Ms. Opdyke that the meeting adjourn. All were in favor of the motion.***

*These minutes were prepared by Kris Hultgren, Staff Planner for distribution on April 30, 2008.*